



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

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**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
LAUREN McDONOUGH
YUSILL SCRIBNER
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(212) 637-2600**

**FBI
CHRISTINE MONACO
JAMES MARGOLIN
(212) 384-2715, 2720**

**U.S. CHARGES UNITED NATIONS OFFICIAL
AND BUSINESSMAN IN PROCUREMENT SCHEME
INVOLVING MILLIONS IN UN CONTRACTS**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MARK J. MERSHON, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, today announced the unsealing in Manhattan federal court of a two-count indictment charging SANJAYA BAHREL and NISHAN KOHLI in a scheme in which KOHLI provided BAHREL with valuable New York City real estate as a reward and to influence BAHREL in assisting KOHLI in getting contracts from the United Nations Procurement Division.

BAHREL, who was the Chief of the Commodity Procurement Section within the Procurement Division of the UN until 2003, and is currently the Chief of the Commercial Activities Service in the UN Postal Administration, was arrested today in New York, New York. KOHLI, the Managing Partner of Thunderbird Industries LLC, and an agent for Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd. ("TCIL"), was arrested today in Miami, Florida.

According to the Indictment, beginning at least in or about 2000, BAHREL used his influence as a senior Procurement Officer at the UN for the benefit of KOHLI and the companies he represented, which included Thunderbird and TCIL, an enterprise wholly owned by the Government of India. BAHREL granted exceptional access to KOHLI, providing KOHLI with a line of communication and source for information within the UN that exceeded what UN vendors could typically expect to receive. In addition, BAHREL was a vocal advocate within the UN for the

companies represented by KOHLI. On occasion, BAHEL even cancelled bids by competing companies and re-bid contracts in order to give a competitive advantage to KOHLI's business interests. BAHEL also assisted KOHLI when disputes arose regarding the execution of UN contracts.

During this period, according to the charges, KOHLI secured a number of valuable contracts for TCIL, including contracts for radio communications equipment, desktop computers and computer monitors, laptop computers, and information technology staffing support, worth a total value of over \$50 million. The UN also awarded Thunderbird a three-year contract with a value of over \$12 million to provide engineering manpower to various UN missions, although ultimately the parties did not execute this contract.

The Indictment further charges that in 2003, KOHLI purchased an apartment at the Dag Hammarskjold Towers in mid-town Manhattan and provided it to BAHEL and BAHEL's family for two years. During that time, BAHEL paid a greatly-reduced monthly rent, and no rent at all for certain months. In May 2005, KOHLI sold the apartment to BAHEL. The purchase price of the apartment was substantially below the market value-so much so that the condominium board of the building contemplated exercising its right of first refusal to block the sale to KOHLI. Moreover, the contracts for the sale of the apartment contained fictitious "credits" that lowered the actual price of the apartment.

BAHEL, 55, resides in New York, New York. BAHEL is expected to appear in Manhattan federal court tomorrow. KOHLI, who resides in Miami, Florida, is expected to appear in Miami federal court tomorrow. If convicted, BAHEL and KOHLI each face a maximum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment. The Indictment also seeks criminal forfeiture from the defendants of their proceeds from the offense, including BAHEL's interest in the apartment at Dag Hammarskjold Towers.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In addition, Mr. GARCIA thanked the United Nations Office of Investigative Oversight Services and the United Nations Procurement Task Force for referring the matter and for their cooperation, assistance, and efforts in this investigation. Mr. GARCIA said the investigation is continuing.

"SANJAYA BAHEL allegedly sold his influence as a UN procurement official. He favored NISHAN KOHLI's companies in obtaining and maintaining valuable UN contracts, and he personally profited as a result. The federal government is committed to exposing corruption in all public institutions," said Mr. GARCIA.

Mr. MERSHON added: "For Americans and people throughout the world, the United Nations has stood for the dual missions of international diplomacy and humanitarian works. BAHEL and KOHLI conspired instead to peddle and purchase influence, to pervert the U.N. procurement process for personal profit."

Assistant United States Attorneys EDWARD O'CALLAGHAN and JACOB BUCHDAHL are in charge of this prosecution.

The charges in the criminal Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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